



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING  
STAFF REPORT**

**Tentative Notice of Action**

*Promoting the wise use of land  
Helping build great communities*

MEETING DATE <b>June 19, 2015</b> LOCAL EFFECTIVE DATE <b>July 3, 2015</b> APPROX FINAL EFFECTIVE DATE <b>July 17, 2015</b>	CONTACT/PHONE <b>Megan Martin</b> <b>(805)781-4163</b> <b>mamartin@co.slo.ca.us</b>	APPLICANT <b>NSA Wireless &amp; Verizon Wireless</b>	FILE NO. <b>DRC2014-00074</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b> Hearing to consider a request by <b>NSA WIRELESS &amp; VERIZON WIRELESS</b> for a Minor Use Permit/Coastal Development Permit (DRC2014-00074) to allow the co-location, construction, and operation of an unmanned telecommunications facility for Verizon Wireless consisting of the installation of (1) electrical meter, (1) disconnect box, (1) GPS antenna, (2) Remote Radio Units, and (1) ground mounted small cell equipment cabinet, and (1) cylindrical antenna on an existing PG&E wooden pole within the public right of way (the project will not include the construction of a new cellular tower as it will be located on the existing 37'-1" PG&E utility wood pole). The proposed project is within the Residential Suburban land use category and is located in the public right of way approximately 125 feet east of the intersection of San Luisito Creek Road and Highway 1. The site is in the Estero Planning Area.			
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION</b> Approve Minor Use Permit DRC2014-00074 based on the findings listed in Exhibit A and the conditions listed in Exhibit B			
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION</b> A Class 3 Categorical Exemption was issued on April 29, 2015 of categorical exemption (ED14-224).			
<b>LAND USE CATEGORY</b> Residential Suburban	<b>COMBINING DESIGNATION</b> Coastal Zone	<b>ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER</b> County right-of-way	<b>SUPERVISOR</b> DISTRICT(S): 2
<b>PLANNING AREA STANDARDS:</b> None applicable Does the project meet applicable Planning Area Standards: Not applicable			
<b>LAND USE ORDINANCE STANDARDS:</b> Section 23.04.124 – Height Limitations Section 23.08.284 - Communications Facilities Does the project conform to the Land Use Ordinance Standards: Yes - see discussion			
<b>FINAL ACTION</b> This tentative decision will become the final action on the project, unless the tentative decision is changed as a result of information obtained at the administrative hearing or is appealed to the County Board of Supervisors pursuant Section 23.01.042 of the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance; effective on the 10th working day after the receipt of the final action by the California Coastal Commission. The tentative decision will be transferred to the Coastal Commission following the required 14-calendar day local appeal period after the administrative hearing.  The applicant is encouraged to call the Central Coast District Office of the Coastal Commission in Santa Cruz at (831) 427-4863 to verify the date of final action. The County will not issue any construction permits prior to the end of the Coastal Commission process.			
<small>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING &amp; BUILDING AT: COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER γ SAN LUIS OBISPO γ CALIFORNIA 93408 γ (805) 781-5600 γ FAX: (805) 781-1242</small>			

EXISTING USES: County right-of-way	
SURROUNDING LAND USE CATEGORIES AND USES: North: Residential Suburban / Single Family Residence East: Agriculture / County right-of-way South: None / Highway 1 West: Residential Suburban / Single Family Residence	
OTHER AGENCY / ADVISORY GROUP INVOLVEMENT: The project was referred to: Public Works, Environmental Health, Cal Fire, Cal Trans, California Coastal Commission, City of Morro Bay	
TOPOGRAPHY: Generally level	VEGETATION: Non-native grasses
PROPOSED SERVICES: Water supply: N/A Sewage Disposal: N/A Fire Protection: Cal Fire	ACCEPTANCE DATE: April 10, 2015

## DISCUSSION

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Verizon Wireless is proposing to locate an unmanned telecommunications facility on an existing PG&E utility wood pole within County right-of-way. The existing pole stands approximately 37'-1" above ground level. A new antenna will be mounted on top of a 6'-0" bayonet on top of the wood pole for a new height of 45'-3" above ground level. A new GPS antenna will be mounted on the wood pole at a height of 16'-1/2". The Remote Radio Unit (RRU) will be mounted on the wood pole at a height of 14'-9" and the new electrical meter with disconnect switch will be mounted to the wood pole at a height of 7'-0" above ground level. One new ground mounted small cell equipment cabinet will be placed about 3.5 linear feet from the pole on a new approximately seven (7) square foot concrete pad. All associated utility lines will be undergrounded between the pole and the cabinet.

### PLANNING AREA STANDARDS:

#### Estero Area Plan

City of Morro Bay Planning Impact Area. The project site is located within the Planning Impact Area for the City of Morro Bay. The project was referred to the City of Morro Bay for review and comments. No comments were received.

Morro and Chorro Groundwater Basins. The project site is within the Chorro Basin. The proposed project consists of co-locating a Verizon Wireless antenna to an existing PG&E utility pole and installing a ground mounted equipment cabinet adjacent to the pole. The project will not create an amount of impervious surface that might otherwise adversely impact aquatic habitats and therefore, will not impact groundwater resources.

## COASTAL ZONE LAND USE ORDINANCE STANDARDS:

### **Section 23.04.124 – Height Limitations**

The maximum height for new structures in the Residential Suburban land use category is 35 feet. However, there are exceptions to height limitations for uninhabited structures (Section 23.04.124(b)(3)). Public utility poles and structures that provide electrical and communications services are included in the height exceptions. The proposed project will provide communications services and is proposed to co-locate to an existing utility pole at a maximum height of 45'-3". The proposed project exceeds the height limitation for the Residential Suburban land use category; however, the proposed project is expected from this requirement per CZLUO 23.04.124(b)(3).

### **Section 23.07.120: Local Coastal Program**

The project site is located within the California Coastal Zone as established by the California Coastal Act of 1976, and is subject to the provisions of the Local Coastal Program.

### **Section 23.08.284 – Communications Facilities**

This Section of the Land Use Ordinance (Title 23) contains specific land use permit and application content requirements as well as siting and design standards for proposed wireless communications facilities. As described below, the proposed project meets these requirements:

#### Radio Frequency Analysis

Section 23.08.284(a)(2) requires applications for communications facilities to provide estimates of non-ionizing radiation generated and/or received by the facility. These shall include estimates of the maximum electric and magnetic field strengths at the edge of the facility site and the extent that measurable fields extend in all directions from the facility.

*Staff Response: The project complies with this requirement because the applicant supplied a report to evaluate the proposed communications facility for compliance with appropriate guidelines limiting human exposure to radio frequency (RF) electromagnetic fields. According to the RF report for this project (Hammett & Edison, Inc., October 28, 2015), the public exposure RF emissions limit from the proposed facility would be less than 0.38% of the FCC standard. The maximum calculated level of RF emissions at the second-floor elevation of any nearby residence (located at least 85 feet away) would be less than 0.60% of the FCC standard. The report concludes that the facility would operate within the FCC standards for RF emissions.*

#### Permit Requirements

Section 23.08.284(b)(1) requires Minor Use Permit approval for proposed wireless communications facilities that are either a) installed on existing structures, or b) co-located at existing communications facility sites. Conditional use permit approval is required for all other communications facilities.

*Staff Response: This project requires Minor Use Permit approval because the proposed antennas are to be mounted on an existing PG&E wooden pole located in the County right-of-way.*

### Development Standards

According to Section 23.08.284(b)(3), the preferred placement for new wireless communication facilities is on existing structures, completely hidden from public view or painted and blended to match existing structures. In addition, all facilities shall be screened with vegetation or landscaping. Where screening with vegetation is not feasible, the facilities shall be disguised to resemble rural, pastoral architecture (e.g. windmills, barns, trees) or other features determined to blend with the surrounding area and be finished in a texture and color deemed unobtrusive to the neighborhood in which it is located.

*Staff Response: The Verizon Wireless antenna will be placed on an existing wooden PG&E power pole and will be painted to blend with the existing wood of the pole. The proposed ground-mounted equipment would be located at the base of the pole. Screening of the cabinet is not feasible because it is within County right-of-way, where obstacles are not normally allowed, however, the cabinet will be painted to blend a matte finish and natural color to blend with the surrounding environment and not be obtrusive to the neighborhood in which it is located. As conditioned, all antennas, coaxial cables, and associated mounting brackets shall be painted a non-reflective color to match.*

### COASTAL PLAN POLICIES:

Shoreline Access: N/A  
Recreation and Visitor Serving: N/A  
Energy and Industrial Development: N/A  
Commercial Fishing, Recreational Boating and Port Facilities: N/A  
Environmentally Sensitive Habitats: N/A  
Agriculture: N/A  
Public Works: N/A  
Coastal Watersheds: N/A  
Visual and Scenic Resources: N/A  
Hazards: N/A  
Archeology: N/A  
Air Quality: N/A

Does the project meet applicable Coastal Plan Policies: None applicable.

### COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP COMMENTS:

The project site is not within the boundaries of a community advisory group.

### AGENCY REVIEW:

Public Works – An encroachment permit is required at the time of application for construction permits. The applicant must demonstrate that all of the proposed equipment will be located more than ten feet from the edge of traveled way. Bollards, barriers or other similar rigid obstacles are not normally allowed within the right-of-way. Permission from the utility pole

owner for the placement of the proposed equipment should be verified before approval of this permit. No stormwater control plan is required.

*Staff Response: The equipment cabinet will be located ten feet from the edge of traveled way and no bollards, barriers, or other similar rigid obstacles are proposed. The applicant has submitted evidence of joint pole agreement between Verizon Wireless and PG&E for use of the utility pole located in the County right-of-way. Staff has considered Public Works comments and it appears the applicant has satisfied the concerns and conditions that will be required by Public Works. The encroachment permit will be considered at the time of application for construction permits by Public Works.*

Environmental Health – Applicant shall submit a hazardous materials business plan for the proposed cell site.

*Staff Response: The project, as conditioned, will be required to submit the business plan at the time of application for construction permits.*

Cal Fire – No concerns.

City of Morro Bay – None received.

Cal Trans – None received.

California Coastal Commission – None received.

#### LEGAL LOT STATUS:

The unmanned telecommunications facility for Verizon Wireless will be co-located to an existing PG&E power pole within the County right-of-way located 125 feet east of the intersection of San Luisito Creek Road and Highway 1.

Staff report prepared by Megan Martin and reviewed by James Caruso and Steve McMasters.